EXCISE

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/GDC/MR
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~~NEA/ARP~~
~~Arieff~~

AUGUST 20 1980

Dear Senator Culver:

I am replying to your letter of June 19 to President Carter, also signed by five of your colleagues, concerning supplemental equipment for Saudi Arabian F-15 aircraft.

I can assure you that the Administration has not departed from the assurances given to the Congress by Secretary Brown in 1978 and that your views and those of the Congress would be taken fully into account in reviewing Saudi Arabian requests for such equipment.

This is not a matter pending decision within the government and no decision on this issue would be made without full prior consultations with the Congress.

I hope this clarifies the situation so that there will be no misapprehensions as to the position of this Administration.

Sincerely,

Brian Atwood
Assistant Secretary for
Congressional Relations

The Honorable
John C. Culver,
United States Senate.

S/S 8014260

NEA/ARP/Arieff 7/25/80
Typed in H: GW 8/20/80
(Same reply to all six signers)

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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON APPROPRIATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

June 19, 1980

Ack Fm/NSC
CONGRESSIONAL
LIAISON

JUN 25 1980
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cc: Tate

The President
The White House
Washington, D. C. 20050

Dear Mr. President:

We are gravely concerned about reports that the Administration is considering a request by Saudi Arabia to purchase modification equipment for the F-15 aircraft the U.S. agreed to provide as part of the 1978 Middle East Arms Sale package. We urge you to deny this request.

It is this type of equipment -- namely additional fuel tanks and bomb racks -- that sparked heated debate during consideration of the proposed sale. The major contributing factor to Senate approval of the sale was a clear understanding that, as Secretary Brown stated in his 9 May 1978 letter to Chairman Sparkman, "Saudi Arabia has not requested nor do we intend to sell any other systems or armaments that would increase the range or enhance the ground attack capability of the F-15." Any modification of the planes to enhance offensive capabilities would be a direct violation of that earlier understanding.

We appreciate that heightening tension in the Middle East and Persian Gulf is cause for Saudi concern, and we can understand that these new tensions necessitate a Saudi review of its defense needs. Nonetheless, we point out that the spirit of the Arms Sale agreement precludes the transfer of any offensively-enhanced F-15s to Saudi Arabia.

We hope that you will clarify to the Saudi Government the nature of the agreement reached during Senate consideration of this matter, and reject without delay their request for aircraft modifications.

Very respectfully,

Warren G. Magnuson

WARREN G. MAGNUSON
United States Senator

THOMAS F. EAGLETON
United States Senator

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CHARLES McC MATHIAS, JR.
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PATRICK J. LEAHY
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